



TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

Literary and Historical Society

OF QUEBEC.

SESSION OF 1870-71.

NEW SERIES.—PART 8.

Quebec:

PRINTED BY MIDDLETON & DAWSON, AT THE "GAZETTE"
GENERAL PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

1871.

This sacred right is fruitlessly announced,
This universal plea in vain addressed,
To eyes and ears of parents who themselves
Did, in the time of their necessity,
Urge it in vain ; and, therefore, like a prayer
That from the humblest floor ascends to Heaven,
It mounts to reach the State's parental ear ;
Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,
And be not most unfeelingly devoid
Of gratitude to Providence, will grant
Th' unquestionable good—which, as we, safe
From interference and external force,
May grant at leisure, without risk incurred,
That what in wisdom for herself she doth,
Others shall ne'er be able to undo."

PAPER V.—THE RED RIVER EXPEDITION OF 1870.

BY LIEUT. H. S. H. RIDDELL, 60TH RIFLES.

(Read before the Society, March 15th, 1871.)

IN the year 1869, it was finally settled, that the country known as Prince Rupert's Land, with all the territorial rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, should be transferred to the Dominion of Canada, on payment of a sum of £300,000. Up to this time, the Hudson's Bay Company were the actual rulers of the colony, as they had power to monopolize the whole of the fur trade, fur being the only export from the country. Throughout the whole of the Settlement, the idea of this cession of their lands and rights caused much indignation; and in the autumn of the year 1869, the first symptoms of a rebellion were discovered. One of its principal promoters was a French-Canadian, of the name of Louis Riel. He is described as having been educated in Canada, and afterwards obtained a situation in St. Paul's, Minnesota, where he lived for some time. Having been dismissed from his situation, he returned to Fort Garry, and, towards the end of 1869, headed the first act of resistance to the new *régime*, by warning a government surveying-party out of the neighbourhood in which they were engaged.

He then organized a government of his own, assisted by another similarly-disposed person, named O'Donoghue, and enthroned himself in Fort Garry as president of the settlement. The Honourable William Macdougall, Minister of Public Works, was chosen by the Canadian Government as first governor of the new Province, and proceeded to Fort Garry to assume his duties. On his arrival at Pembina, a small village on the boundary of British and American

territory, he found that the insurgents were determined to prevent his entry into the settlement, and had an armed party stationed on the road between Pembina and Fort Garry for that purpose. Mr. McDougall was, therefore, unable to go further, and had to remain at Pembina for some months. In the meantime, Riel was having it all his own way; he secured all the arms and ammunition in possession of the Hudson's Bay Company, and served them out among his followers; he searched private houses, and possessed himself of anything that he thought might prove of use. Those of the inhabitants who did not feel inclined to take the oath of allegiance to him, were imprisoned by his orders; and a Canadian, of the name of Scott, who to the last maintained his refusal to take this oath, was condemned to be shot. A mock court-martial was assembled for his trial; and at the execution of the sentence of death, there was nobody in the settlement who had the courage to say a word against this informal murder.

These events determined the government upon sending an armed force to the Red River to restore order and maintain the Queen's supremacy; and money for that purpose was voted in Parliament at the same time that the bill for the transfer of the new province, called the Manitoba Bill, was introduced. The Imperial Government arranged to pay one-fourth of the expense of this expedition, and the Dominion of Canada was to pay the remainder.

The organization of the force was entrusted to Lieutenant-General Honble. James Lindsay, who had been sent out from England for that purpose, and who, a few years since, had been in command of one of the military districts in this country. Lately, he has held the position of Inspector-General of Reserve Forces in England. Colonel Wolseley, late Quarter-Master-General in Montreal, was appointed to command the expedition, which was composed of the following troops:

Royal Artillery:—19 non-commissioned officers and men,
under Lieut. Alleyn;

Royal Engineers:—19 non-commissioned officers and men,
under Lieut. Heneage;

1st Battalion 60th Rifles:—26 officers and 351 non-commissioned officers and men, under Colonel Feilden;

Army-Service Corps:—12 non-commissioned officers and men;

Army-Hospital Corps:—8 non-commissioned officers and men;

1st, or Ontario Battalion of Militia:—28 officers and 350 non-commissioned officers and men, under Lieut.-Colonel Jarvis;

2nd, or Quebec Battalion of Militia:—28 officers and 350 non-commissioned officers and men, under Lt.-Col. Casault;

Making a total of 84 regimental officers and 1109 non-commissioned officers and men.

The staff consisted of :

Colonel Wolseley, commanding;

Captain Huyshe, Rifle Brigade,	} Aides-de-	
Lieut. Denison, Governor-General's Body-Guard,		} Camp;
Lieut.-Colonel Bolton, Royal Artillery, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General;		

Major M'Leod, Brigade-Major of Militia;

Lieut.-Colonel McNeill, V.C., attached to staff;

Surgeon-Major Young, M.D., 60th Rifles, Principal Medical Officer;

Staff-Assistant-Surgeons Shaw, Robertson, and Chatterton;

• And the following officers of the Control Department :

Assistant-Controller Irvine ;

Commissary Pennell ;

“ Mellish ;

Deputy-Commissary Marston ;

“ “ Meyer ;

“ “ Beamish ;

Assist.-Commissary Jolly.

Transport Service :

Captain Nagle, Captain Money, and Lieut. Smyth, late R. C. Rifles ;

From the Militia, Capt. Peebles was attached as Deputy-Commissary.

Total, of all ranks, 1213.

The expedition was to start for Lake Superior as early as possible in the spring, and recruiting for the militia regiments was carried on rapidly. No lack of either officers or men was found ; and had it been necessary to raise another entire battalion, it could in a very short time have been accomplished. The Crystal Palace, in Toronto, was converted into a barrack, and for some weeks was occupied by the militia battalions. The boats to be used (140 in number) were supplied by different boat-builders throughout the Dominion, who had been furnished with the size and description of the boats required by the agent of the Public Works Department. This department had also engaged to have a road cut through the forest, and ready to be used on our arrival, from Thunder Bay to Lake Shebandowan, a distance of 46 miles. The officers entrusted with the organization and command of the force had not travelled further on the route than Collingwood, and, therefore, were obliged to believe everything they were told about the road by Mr. Dawson, the government engineer.

Lieutenant-General Lindsay personally inspected the 60th Rifles and the militia, previous to their departure; and on the 21st May, 1870, the first detachment of the expedition left Toronto for Thunder Bay. It consisted of 3 officers (including myself) and 51 men of the 60th Rifles, under Captain Ward, and 1 sergeant and 3 men of the Army Hospital Corps; it was accompanied by Colonel Wolseley and some of his staff, and also by Mr. Dawson.

The men were armed with the short Snider breech-loading rifle, and carried 60 rounds of ammunition. The officers were supplied with breech-loading rifle carbines, and also carried 60 rounds. In addition to this weapon, the regimental officers were allowed to carry any others they chose, except swords; and on the day of their departure, appeared with their persons profusely decorated with revolvers and deadly-looking scalping-knives. No one could take a large wardrobe with him, as the regulation-weight of baggage allowed to each officer, 90 lbs., was strictly enforced, and the men had only what they could carry in their knapsacks. No one officially connected with the equipment of the expedition, as far as regarded clothing, could have had much idea of the description of work the troops would be required to undertake, or, doubtless, a more suitable kind of dress would have been supplied.

The Northern Railway Company put on special trains for the conveyance of the troops to Collingwood, a distance of 94 miles from Toronto; and on our arrival there, we at once embarked on board the fine steamer *Chicora*, one of the line of mail-steamers plying between Collingwood and Thunder Bay. A great number of the horses which were to be used in the transport-service were shipped on board the *Chicora*, under charge of some of the men who had been engaged as drivers and teamsters. Most of these men were singularly ignorant of their duties, and in several instances were detected in the act of ill-treating their horses; and the severe examples made of those so detected proved to any others

similarly inclined that the *Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals* had its representatives in uninhabited, as well as in inhabited regions. The *Chicora* sailed that evening, and on 23rd May we arrived at the *Sault St. Marie*. Here we had to land the troops and munitions of war, and send the steamer almost empty through the canal on the American side of the St. Marie River. On the first trip of the *Chicora* that season, she had been refused a passage through the canal by the American government, and had to land all her freight on the opposite side. Had she been refused admittance on this occasion, whether empty or otherwise, it would not have given us any extra trouble, as the *Algoma*, another steamer of the same line, had been sent through empty some time since, and was kept on Lake Superior in case of such an emergency. Besides the *Algoma*, the propellers *Brooklyn* and *Shickluna* had been chartered. The *Chicora*, however, passed safely through; and after a march up the banks, of about three miles, the men were again embarked and the stores shipped.

A detachment of militia, consisting of two companies, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Bolton, had been sent to the Sault St. Marie to assist in the transport of the stores from Lake Huron to Lake Superior; and hearing reports that a Fenian cruiser had been heard of in the latter lake, Colonel Wolseley determined upon sending one company on board the *Shickluna*, which had three schooners, laden with stores, in tow, to protect it in case of necessity. Lake Superior was safely crossed, and early on the morning of 25th May the high and imposing headland of Thunder Cape was in sight. The entrance to the Bay is between Thunder Cape, 1,350 feet above the level of the lake, and Pie Island, which lies four or five miles to the south-west, at an elevation of 850 feet. A few hours afterwards saw us at anchor off the depot, which had been formed at the commencement of the Dawson Road, and which was named Prince Arthur's Landing by Colonel Wolseley. We had heard a great deal of the beauty

of Lake Superior, and certainly had during our voyage passed through some very fine scenery, and, consequently, were very much disappointed at the desolate appearance which Prince Arthur's Landing presented on our disembarkation. A fearful fire, extending over a surface of many square miles, had lately raged over the country between the Landing and Shebandowan Lake, destroying a great deal of the road and some of the bridges on it. A forest through which fire has passed presents a melancholy spectacle. Half-burnt trunks of trees here and there stand erect, shorn of branches, waiting for another conflagration or strong wind to prostrate them to the ground. There they lay, piled in horrible, blackened confusion, until the destroying element, passing over again, completes their destruction.

The forest had formerly extended to the water-side; but the fire had saved us the trouble of clearing the ground for our camp, which was pitched on a hill not far from the lake. The fire had only taken place a short time prior to our arrival; and although, happily, no lives were lost, some persons had very narrow escapes from it. Mr. St. John, the special correspondent of the *Toronto Globe*, attached to the expedition, told me that he had to drive for his life on his return from a survey of the road, and that had he not been within half a day's journey of Lake Superior at the time, he must have been overtaken by the flames. Four miles from the Landing is the mouth of the Kaministiquia River, or Kaministakwoya, according to Sir John Richardson, "the river that runs far about;" half a mile up which, on the left or north bank, Fort William, one of the principal posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, is situated. At a distance of two miles from the Fort is the mission of the Immaculate Conception, which is under the charge of the Reverend Pierre Choné, who has for many years resided there. Three miles further up the river lies McKay's Mountain, which has an elevation of 1000 feet above the lake. Six miles north

of the Landing is the Current River, near which are the Silver Mines, owned at that time by a Montreal mining company.

The first care of the British soldier, on settling down, is to make himself as comfortable as he possibly can, under the circumstances ; so the tents were pitched on the softest piece of ground that could be discovered, and the daily rations of Her Majesty to her soldiers on service—salt pork, tea, and biscuit—were speedily served out.

To each man the following ration was issued daily :

- 1 lb. biscuit, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. bread or flour ;
- 1 lb. salt pork, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. fresh meat ;
- 2 oz. sugar, 1 oz. tea, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint beans, or $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. preserved potatoes.

As we had no fresh meat on the day of disembarkation, we were obliged to put up with the salt pork.

Among the men there are generally a good many that are very fair cooks ; consequently, they got on all right ; but in the case of the officers, it was different. From Colonel Wolseley downwards, all had at first a great objection to have recourse to the services of a professed cook : we had come there determined to rough it, and rough it we would. A solemn conclave was held, which resulted in my being appointed cook to the commander-in-chief, with one of my brother-officers to assist me. I never saw a piece of pork cooked in my life, but determined to do the best I could. I seized some sticks, lighted them, threw a huge junk of pork into a pot of water, put it on the sticks, and sat down to watch the effect. The fire was soon exhausted, and so was my patience ; and, like a bad workman blaming his tools, I was just beginning to abuse the pork for not boiling, and the fire for not burning, when the arrival of the colonel put an end to my difficulties. He shewed me, in the scientific manner of an old campaigner, how to dig a

trench in the ground, and with stones and sticks to construct a sander over it, on which to place my cooking-utensils; and the result was, that when dinner-time approached, a hard, tough mass of over-boiled meat was fished out of the pot, with the assistance of a forked stick, and served up, with tea and biscuit, as the mid-day repast of the officers.

Hard work, of every description, went on day after day, commencing at sunrise, and everybody seemed to work with a will. A large raft, or scow, was employed for the purpose of bringing the horses and stores from the ship to the landing, whence they were conveyed to the different tents and sheds prepared for them; and road-making and the preparation of the militia camp were also commenced. An examination of the road shewed it to be in anything but the good condition reported. Thirty miles of it were considered as made; but from the nature of the ground in heavy weather, many parts became almost impassable. Twelve miles were cut through the forest; but the stumps and roots of the trees had not been cleared away, nor the road corduroyed in swampy or muddy parts. The remainder of the distance to Shebandowan Lake had not been touched, and was still virgin forest. A large number of troops were daily employed at work on the road. The soil being principally sand and peat, for some distance, it was necessary to lay down on it what is called corduroy, as, after a heavy rain, the road became so slippery and uneven, that the horses were unable to drag their heavy waggons over it without great labour. Logs of wood, ten or twelve feet long, were cut and laid down on the road, side by side, and branches and earth thrown over them to keep them packed close together; in the swampy places, drains were dug and small bridges built, in order to prevent the road being flooded after a fall of rain.

On 27th May, another detachment of the 60th Rifles arrived in the steamers *Algoma* and *Brooklyn*; it was accompanied by Mr. Simpson, the member for the district

of Algoma, who was on his way up the country to conciliate the Indians and explain the object of the expedition. Day after day, steamers and schooners arrived, bringing troops and stores from Collingwood. The militia regiments were encamped about half-a-mile from the landing, and employed like the regulars in working on the road and landing stores from the ships. A large flat-bottomed scow was worked by a rope from the vessels to the wharf, and for five weeks we had the services of a small tug.

While at Thunder Bay, we had an opportunity of seeing for the first time in many cases the red-skin in full paint and feathers. Three Chippewa Indians and a squaw arrived from Fort Francis, in order to see what was going on, and report accordingly to their tribe. They were headed by a chief of the tribe, named Black Stone, who was attired in rather a richer dress than the others, and wore a sort of crown on the back of his head, formed of porcupine quills and eagle's feathers, bound round with mink and ermine. They were introduced formally to Colonel Wolseley, and proceeded at once to the object of their visit, which was, in reality, to get as much out of him in the way of presents and food as they could. They avowed their great loyalty to the Queen, but were very much astonished at finding she had not considered it necessary to ask their leave before cutting a road through their territory. They were assured that we had no intention of appropriating their lands, but merely wished for a right of way. This explanation seemed to give satisfaction, for they at once consented to allow us as much wood and water along the route as we desired. The band seemed to astonish them; but they were too dignified and haughty to express any surprise. They stayed at the landing until 6th June, and then returned to Fort Francis.

As it was feared that the Fenians would attack the landing after the departure of the expedition, a redoubt, or small fort, with a magazine inside it, was constructed for the reception of the ammunition, which was to be left


behind. A company of the Quebec militia, under Captain De Bellefeuille, with two subalterns, was left behind in charge of it.

The River Kaministiquia, flowing out of Lake Shebandowan, is joined by two others of the same size before it empties its waters into Thunder Bay. It was believed that the navigation of this river by the boats was impossible, on account of the numerous and dangerous rapids and falls; but as the road was in a very incomplete state, Colonel Wolseley determined to send a company up this river as an experiment. It was commanded by Captain Young; and the success which attended the great efforts made by his men justified the selection made by the Colonel, as this route to Shebandowan now rendered us independent of the road. Other companies, both of regulars and militia, were afterwards sent up by the Kaministiquia.

The scenery on the Kaministiquia is very fine; the Kakabeka Falls, 30 miles from Lake Superior, being one of the most picturesque spots visited on the route. These falls are 120 feet high, and are at an elevation of 175 feet above the level of Lake Superior. The length of the road from Thunder Bay to Shebandowan is from 46 to 48 miles; at the place where it crosses the Kaministiquia, 21 miles from the bay, and also five miles further on, where it crosses the Mattawan, bridges had been built and depots formed for the forwarding of stores to the lake.

Different companies were stationed at these places, in order to assist in the completion of the road. As the work progressed, more detachments of troops were sent from Thunder Bay, and those in advance sent on towards Lake Shebandowan. The company to which I belonged left the landing at three o'clock on the morning of the 3rd July, and proceeded by a march of two days to the Mattawan Bridge, followed the day afterwards by the head-quarters of the expedition. During this march, the men of my company

for the first time found the use of the mosquito-nets with which they had been supplied. These veils are made of fine net, made to fit close round the cap and neck, and are kept off the face by a crinoline wire. They were seldom used after we left Lake Shebandowan, except for the purpose of straining muddy or discoloured water preparatory to making tea. During the time that the men were on the roads, they were too busy to mind the attacks of the rapacious mosquito; and at night they used to keep it out of their tents by lighting a small fire inside, and allowing it to smoulder till the tent was full of smoke. No insect of any kind would then come near.



The officers in charge of the companies which had been sent up to the Mattawan Bridge by the river, complained bitterly of some of the men who had been engaged as *voyageurs*, but praised the skill and courage of the Iroquois Indians. Like the teamsters of the transport-service, the former seemed to have been engaged indiscriminately, whether they had had any experience or not in managing boats in rapid water. I know, for a fact, that one man had left his situation as driver of the omnibus belonging to the Queen's Hotel, in Toronto, in order to follow the fortunes of the *voyageurs*; and another, in answer to my enquiry whether he had ever been in a boat before in his life, answered, indignantly: "Why, certainly! isn't my brother boss of a steam-tug in Toronto?"

Gradually we worked our way towards the lake—the point at which our road-making labours would cease. Young's Landing, three miles from the Mattawan Bridge, so called after the officer who may justly be entitled the pioneer of the Kamanistaquia; Brown's Lane, or Calderon's Landing, seven miles further on, and Oskondaga Creek, were passed in their turn. From Brown's Lane most of the stores were sent up by the Mattawan River to Oskondaga Creek, in consequence of the incomplete state of the road; and on their arrival at the latter depot, they were forwarded

by road to the Dam-Site, or Ward's Landing, where they were again shipped, and sent four miles up the river, to McNeill's Bay, in Shebandowan Lake. Colonel McNeill, the present Military Secretary to the Governor-General, was stationed at the lake to superintend the departure of the different brigades of boats, the provisioning of which was undertaken by two officers of the Control Department. The boats, as they arrived, were hauled up on the beach of the lake to be repaired by a ship's carpenter; and much they needed it after the rough treatment they had undergone on the rocks in the rivers, and the jolting they had received when on the top of the waggons. When ready again for use, they were launched and distributed in brigades of six to each company, each boat being intended to carry nine or ten soldiers, besides three Indians or *voyageurs*. Fortunate was the officer who secured for his boat the skilful Iroquois, the finest boatman in Canada; whilst he who was entrusted to the tender mercies of the ex-omnibus-driver soon came to the conclusion that in the stable, not in the boat, was where his guide found himself most at home.

Sixty days' provisions, consisting of salt-pork, beans, preserved potatoes (sent out from England expressly for the expedition), flour, biscuit, pepper, salt, tea, and sugar, were issued to each brigade. Besides provisions and spare stores, each boat had to carry camp equipment, ammunition, and an arm-chest, containing the rifles, cooking-utensils, and the men's own scanty allowance of baggage, consisting of their knapsacks, with two grey blankets and a waterproof sheet each. With each brigade was a carpenter's tool-box, which was found of great use, and contained the requisites for mending the boats. The distance to be travelled by water was about 560 miles. The boats, which were built in Quebec, were 31 in number, and were all of the carvel build; sixteen of them were rigged with sprits, and the others with lug-sails. They had been constructed under the superintendence of Mr. Pentland, assisted by Captain Dick,

the latter a gentleman who has long been in charge of the ship building yards of Messrs. Allan Gilmour & Company, by whom he was recommended. The remainder of the boats, 119 in number, were clinker-built. The average length of the boats was 32 feet and 6 feet beam; each could fit-up two masts, and six oars were generally used. A light gig and three large bark-canoes were supplied for the staff. The boats and *voyageurs* not required for the conveyance of troops, were employed in forwarding a reserve of supplies to Fort Francis. Along the route, about 42 portages, varying in length from 40 to 1800 yards, had to be crossed; and portage-straps and slings, to be used when carrying the stores across, were issued to the different boats. Up to the time that the different detachments left Shebandowan, they had been supplied with fresh meat, except when going up the Kaministaquia; but when they started across the lake, until they reached Fort Garry, they had neither fresh meat nor vegetables, except at Fort Francis and Fort Alexander, where a few head of cattle were procured. Fresh bread had been baked at Prince Arthur's Landing, Mattawan Bridge, and the Dam-Site; and as field-ovens were taken by the Army-Service Corps, we had bread again at Fort Francis and Fort Garry. It was always excellent—as, indeed, were the other rations of every description that were issued. The ration of pork, 1 lb., was hardly sufficient for a man who had worked from 3 a.m. until 6 p.m., incessantly; and had it been increased to 2 lbs., the men would not have found much difficulty in disposing of it. In fact, so hungry were they, sometimes, that I have seen a man eat his salt pork *raw*, as he could not wait until it was cooked for him.

The distribution of the force was as follows:—The Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, and 60th Rifles were to proceed to Fort Garry, and return without delay. The Ontario battalion was to proceed to Fort Garry, leaving one company encamped at Fort Francis until 1st September, when it was to proceed to Fort Garry by the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods. The Quebec battalion

was to proceed to Lower Fort Garry, or the Stone Fort, with the exception of one company left at Prince Arthur's Landing until the return of the regulars, when it was likewise to return to Montreal.

In order to give you some idea of the weight of the cargo the men had to pull in the boats, and carry over the portages, I will describe the exact quantity of stores with which my boat was loaded before leaving McNeill's Bay :

Pork—9 barrels, at 200 lbs. each=1800 lbs. Flour—7 barrels, at 100 lbs. each=700 lbs. Biscuit—5 barrels, at 100 lbs. each=500 lbs. Tea—3 canisters=50 lbs. Beans—2 bags=60 lbs. Potatoes—2 boxes=80 lbs. Ammunition—2 boxes=100 lbs. Total, 3,290 lbs. Our boat and camp-equipment also added considerably to the weight.

A bottle of mosquito-oil, which was not of the slightest use, was put in each boat ; it smelt so horribly, that the men would seldom use it on their hands and faces, and much preferred being bitten by the insects it was supposed to protect them from. However, when the supply of coal-oil failed, it came in handy.

The portage-strap is a long piece of cariboo-hide, from 2½ to 3 inches wide in the centre, and tapering off gradually towards the ends, in order to enable it to be secured or fastened round the barrel or package. The Indians, skilled in its use, shewed the men how to fasten it, so that the load would rest on the upper part of the back, and lie there by the strap passed round the forehead. Short slings, made of rope, for carrying the heavy barrels over the portages, were also supplied : these slings had a loop at each end, and with two short poles formed a sort of hand-barrow, in which the pork could be carried by those who were unaccustomed to the use of the portage-strap. The men soon got into the way of carrying heavy loads with the portage-straps, and the slings were then discarded.

On the evening of Saturday, 16th July, the first two brigades of boats, consisting of two companies of the 60th Rifles, under command of Colonel Feilden, left McNeill's Bay, on their long journey of nearly 600 miles: they were accompanied by a detachment of Royal Engineers and of Royal Artillery, with two of the seven-pounder mountain-guns, mounted in boats, especially prepared for them. On the 17th July, two more companies, under Captains Dundas and Buller, started. On the 18th July, one company, under Captain Northey, was despatched. This brigade was accompanied by Colonel Bolton, D. A. A. General; and on Tuesday, the 19th, Captain Wallace's company, to which I was attached during the expedition, left. Captain McCalmont, an officer of the 9th Lancers, who had come out from England to join the force, took passage with us. The following day, 20th July, Captain Calderon's company left—the last of the regulars. During the advance, the expeditionary force, from front to rear, covered the route for 150 miles. Very few guides could be procured to pilot us to Fort Francis; but on arrival there, Indians and half-breeds, accustomed to the navigation of the Winnipeg River, were engaged. Thus, the first detachment of the expedition left Shebandowan on July 16th; and on August the 2nd, the last company of the militia was despatched. I propose, now, to follow the fortunes of my own company during the advance to the Red River.


Shebandowan Lake is about 21 miles long and six miles across in its widest part: the entire length of the lake, which runs in a west-by-north direction, has to be traversed before reaching the portage leading to the Kashaboiwe Lake. The stream by which the Kashaboiwe Lake discharges its waters descends about 29 feet, in its course of 70 chains, to Lake Shebandowan. Besides the boats which conveyed the company, there was one which was appropriated to the use of the Army-Service Corps, commanded by Mr. Mellish: this officer, not being quite sure

of his swimming abilities, should they be called into requisition, had been careful to select the largest boat he could find ready for use; whereas the other officers had been anxious to obtain those of the smallest and lightest build. The beautiful evening on which we started seemed an augury of fine weather, and success on this our start into the depths of an almost unknown wilderness, and the spirits of the men were high in consequence. The hard work they had done on the roads and rivers for the last month, and the healthy life they had led in the open air, made them well fitted for the great task they had in hand. No spirits were issued or allowed, but a large quantity of tea instead; and the fact that, from the commencement to the end of the expedition, sickness of any consequence was unknown, proved that the temperance plan succeeded, indeed, admirably.

Not wishing to tire the men the first day, the officer in command halted the little fleet about 8 p.m. The boats were then safely moored on the beach, and a tent pitched on the banks of a land-locked bay for the night. The men, anxious to accustom themselves to bivouacking, preferred to sleep in the open air, in order to be ready to make an early start in the morning. One of the most violent thunder-storms I ever witnessed passed over us that night: the rain for hours poured down incessantly, and the flashes of lightning were frequent, and of extreme brilliancy. The men were huddled together under the tarpaulins and water-proof sheets, as they had not had time to pitch their tents before the fury of the storm was upon them. Early in the morning the boats were taken to a safer anchorage, as we feared the strong wind would blow them on shore. Several times we attempted to start, but were unable to make any way against the high sea that was running, until the evening, when the wind abated. The following day, we arrived at the Kashaboiwe Portage.

I will now describe the manner in which the boats were conveyed across the portages. The stores were first carried

across, and piled, ready for re-shipment, close to the water-side. The boats were then hauled ashore, and the tow-lines fastened to their bows. The men then harnessed themselves with their portage-straps and slings to the tow-lines; and the boats, with a few men on either side to keep them on their keels, were dragged over the skids of wood laid down to serve as rollers along the portage. As the companies in front of us had cut the skids and laid them down, we got over the portage without much delay, in spite of the great quantity of stores we had to carry.



On July 22nd, steering due north, we crossed Lake Kashaboiwe, which has a surface-area of 8 square miles, to the Height-of-Land Portage, one of the longest on the route, being over a mile; and it was not until the 25th of July that we launched our boats again for the voyage across the Lac des Milles Lacs, 20 $\frac{12}{100}$ feet above the level of Lake Shebandowan. This lake is of great size, and of a very curious and straggling shape, and, from the innumerable islands in it, well deserves its name. It was, therefore, extremely difficult to find our way across it, as our Chippewa guide several times lost his way. We were, however, more fortunate than some of the other companies, the guides of which allowed them to wander for miles out of their course, thereby losing a great deal of valuable time. After passing the Height-of-Land, we had the stream in our favour for the rest of the way. In the Lac des Milles Lacs, we met, for the first time, the savage in his native wilds. The Indians we met here belonged to the same tribe as the haughty chief who had visited us at Thunder Bay, and were certainly the ugliest and dirtiest people I ever saw. Immediately they saw us, they paddled round and round the boats, begging for provisions, and offering to exchange the fish they had caught for pork and flour. There were seldom more than three in each canoe, and could propel their little craft through the water at a great rate. Some of them had curiously-worked tobacco-pouches, made of beads and silk, and other

articles of similar interest. Upon their bodies they wore very little clothing, and allowed the burning sun to shine down on their heads with no other protection against it than the long black hair they wore almost down to their shoulders. As they sat paddling in their canoes, I could seldom tell the men from the women, they were so much alike in dress and appearance. When we camped, they would remain near us all night, in hopes of getting something; and when we left, they would stay behind and eagerly search the ground for any bits of biscuit that might have been left.

They live in wig-wams, made of birch bark stretched over poles driven into the ground in a circle, and meeting at the top. A hole is left at the top to let the smoke of the fire out. When on the move, they generally take the birch bark with them, but leave the poles standing. Knowing the dirty habits of these poor people, we were careful to avoid pitching our tents anywhere near the remains of a wig-wam. How they manage to find means of subsistence during the long winter months, is a marvel; but in the summer they live on the fish with which all the lakes and rivers are abundantly stocked, and on the wild fruit which grows in plenty on shore. The woods are singularly destitute of game of any description.

Our work began at 3 o'clock in the morning, and before starting the men had some hot tea and biscuit. Afterwards, tents were struck, and stowed away again in the boats. At eight o'clock we stopped for an hour for breakfast, and at one o'clock for an hour for dinner. While the former meal was preparing, the lake was alive with human figures swimming and splashing about; for, thanks to Mediterranean experience, there were few in our regiment who were not skilled in the useful art of natation. Dinner over, we did not halt until dark, when tents were pitched, or, if the weather were fine, a bivouac for the night prepared. The rations, consisting of a pound of pork and a pound of biscuit or flour, with beans, tea, and sugar, were then served out, and supper cooked over the camp-fires, around which we sat

while our meal was preparing, discussing the adventures of the day. Sometimes our daily fare was varied with the fish we had caught from the boats with a trolling-bait, or bought from the Indians. We used to make the flour into a sort of pan-cake, known among the men by the unappetising title of "choke-dog," from the extreme tenaciousness with which it was wont to stick in our throats when endeavouring to relieve the pangs of hunger. The biscuit was always very good, and when fried in pork-fat, and served up hot and greasy, was much relished.

After traversing the Lac des Milles Lacs, for a distance of 21 miles, the next portage, the Baril, was reached. Here we had to drag the boats up a steep incline of about 100 feet, and had very hard work. The Baril Portage, which leads into Baril Lake, is about 400 yards across. Eight miles across Baril Lake, which is the counterpart of the extremity of Lac des Milles Lacs, brought us to the *Brulé*, or Side-Hill Portage, the scenery round which was very pretty. On leaving the portage the boats were poled down a narrow stream for a mile and a-half, when we passed into Lake Windigoostigon, or Cannibal Lake, so called in commemoration of a deed of violence committed there by a band of Ojibways, in the year 1811. When crossing this long stretch of water, the wind, blowing strongly from the S. S. W., was dead against us, and, consequently, made our progress for some time rather slow. A row of twelve miles brought us to the entrance to the French River, down which we went at a great pace, a strong stream being in our favour. The numerous shoals and rocks in this river made the navigation dangerous in the extreme, and several boats received damage that compelled the officers in charge of them to run in-shore and bivouac for the night; in the meantime, the remainder of the boats had gone on to the Great French Portage, at which they did not arrive until nearly ten, p. m. By going down the French River we saved about a mile of portage. The water-level at the head

of the French Portage is 55 feet below that of Lac des Milles Lacs. The timber on this portage consists of aspen, pine, and spruce. The French River flows into the Little French Lake, and another small river flows thence into Lake Kaogassikok. While crossing this lake, with a fine breeze behind us, we were overtaken by the mail canoe from Fort William to Fort Francis.

Mr. McIntyre, the Hudson's Bay officer at Fort William, had engaged to despatch a canoe every week on the arrival of the mail-steamers from Collingwood. It was manned by two half-naked savages, who gave us their mail-bags to look over, and allowed us to sort any letters and papers that there might be for our brigade. They seemed to fully appreciate the position they held, and pointed with great exultation to the small Union-Jack flying on the bow of their canoe, as they paddled swiftly away.

The next Portage was the Pine, 27 miles from the French Portage; thence across a small lake to the Portage des Deux Rivières, which, in a distance of 32 chains, brought us down 117 feet, into Sturgeon Lake.

The Deux Rivières Portage was one of the most difficult we had as yet encountered: in the centre of it was a high rock, up which a ladder of felled trees had been constructed; and at the side, steps were cut for the men to carry their loads up. Had one of the ropes snapped when hauling the boats up this ladder, the men at work would, doubtless, have received very severe injuries, and the boat been broken, to a certainty. At the mouth of Sturgeon River, leading into the beautiful lake of that name, we saw a sturgeon for the first time. As Longfellow would describe it:

On the white sand of the bottom
Lay the monster Mishe Nahma—
Lay the Sturgeon, King of Fishes:
Through his gills he breathed the water;
With his fins he fanned and winnowed.

The King of Fishes did not reign very long in this instance, for he was no sooner seen than an ounce of shot put an end to his existence. The Indian who discovered it was so excited, that he jumped out of the boat into the water, and returned, bearing the prize in triumph. He undertook to prepare it for our supper; and the roe, artistically cooked by one of the officers, was voted most delicious by all who tasted it.

The scenery on the Sturgeon Lake is well described by Professor Hind, in his narrative of the exploring expedition of 1857. He says:

"No lake yet seen on the route can bear comparison, for picturesque scenery, with Sturgeon Lake. The numerous deep bays, backed by high wooded hills or rocks, rugged or smooth, according to their aspects; its sudden contraction into a river-breadth for a few yards between large islands, and the equally abrupt breaking-out again into open stretches of water, offered a constant and most pleasing variety of scene. The high, jutting points of granite rock, which here and there confine the channel, offer rare opportunities for beholding on one side an intricate maze of island scenery, and on the other an open expanse of lake, with deep and gloomy bays, stretching, seemingly, into the dark forest as far as the eye can reach."

After rowing the entire length of Sturgeon Lake, or, rather, the succession of lakes and rivers bearing that name, we arrived at the River Maligne, where there were several dangerous rapids to be run. At the first rapid, an Iroquois Indian, named Ignace, had been stationed with a band of skilled boatmen, consisting of Iroquois and French-Canadians, for the purpose of steering the boats down. To the indignation of the ex-omnibus-driver I before mentioned, and other *voyageurs* of his stamp, Ignace commenced his operations by turning every one out of the boats, except four soldiers left in each to row.

Three pilots then got into each boat, and, with their long paddles and sweeps, steered into the middle of the foaming waters. With a rush, and pulled as hard as the strong arms at work were capable of, the boats entered the rapids. The slightest mistake on the part of the steersman, and they would have been smashed to pieces on the huge rocks that we passed closer than was pleasant. Everyone worked as if for his life; and the wild cries of the Indians, as they shouted directions to each other in their strange language, made those looking on from the shore feel certain that some accident was going to happen; but the cheers and laughter of the crews, as the boats were pulled into smooth water at the foot of the rapids soon dispelled the illusion.

The river Maligne flows into Lac Lacroix, or the great Nequaquon Lake, from which we passed into Loon Lake and Nameukan Lake. While camped on an island in the latter, we were visited by about 100 half-starved, miserable-looking savages, who tried hard to induce us to part with some of our provisions. We had very little to spare, but gave them some flour and biscuit, in hopes of getting rid of them. Having crossed the Barq Portage, we came into the fine expanse of Rainy Lake, 50 miles long by 38 broad, and having an elevation above Lake Superior of 435 feet. A voyage of 40 miles along the lake, steering W. by N., brought us to the Rainy River, two miles down which Fort Francis, a post of the Hudson's Bay Company, is situated.

General Lefroy made Rainy Lake 1,160 feet above the sea, by barometrical measurement: he describes its shores as low, sterile, and rocky, timber being very poor, and, on the whole, the general aspect of the shores of the lake as very forbidding, and furnishing almost everywhere, on the ridges and hill-flanks, a picture of hopeless sterility and desolate waste. At the entrance to the Rainy River the scenery is very pretty, and the green and luxuriant foliage of the trees formed a pleasing contrast to the barren wilderness through

which we had lately passed. After leaving Rainy Lake, we arrived at the head of the fine falls named the Chaudière, and saw Fort Francis lying on our right. Some days before our arrival, the Fort had been the scene of a great Indian meeting, which was called by the chiefs of the tribes, to have what they called a "pow-wow" with Colonel Wolseley. Mr. Mackenzie, the officer of the Company in charge of the Post, received us very kindly, and gave us some vegetables and other similar delicacies, which were much appreciated after our monotonous daily fare of fried pork and "choke-dog." The Commander-in-Chief had already arrived there, but said, "Good-bye! good-bye! go on! you are a long way behind the rest!"—almost before we had time to say "How do you do?" to him!

We replenished our stock of provisions, and left behind the useless *voyageurs*; and having obtained a guide who was experienced in the navigation of the Winnipeg River, we again embarked, and continued our voyage down the Rainy River that evening. The general course of this fine river is a few degrees to the north of west, for a distance of 80 miles by the winding of the river, and in an air-line 60 miles: the current is gentle and uniform throughout, except in the two rapids, called, respectively, the Manitou and Long Rapids, which let the river down about $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The breadth of the river varies from 200 to 300 yards; its banks are thickly wooded with elm, balsam, poplar, ash, and oak. Sturgeon are very numerous, both in this river and in the Lake of the Woods, and form the staple food of the Indians, who preserve the flesh by drying it like pemican, and after pounding it up and mixing with oil, put it into bags made of sturgeon-skin. All night we drifted slowly down the river, two men sitting up in each boat to row while the others slept.

The Lake of the Woods, into which the Rainy River flows, is 72 miles in length, and is 377 feet above Lake Superior, or 977 feet above the level of the sea. From the

mouth of the Rainy River to Rat Portage, the place where the Winnipeg River issues, is about seventy miles.

Having a strong breeze in our favour all the way across, we made a rapid passage, and arrived at Rat Portage, another post of the Hudson's Bay Company, on August the 11th, having done the distance from Fort Francis, on the Rainy River, in 72 hours, which we were told was the fastest passage on record.

Mr. Hind describes the Winnipeg River as follows:
"Issuing from the Lake of the Woods through several gaps
"in the northern rim of the lake, the River Winnipeg flows
"through numerous tortuous channels for many miles of its
"course, in a north-easterly direction. Some of the channels
"unite with the main stream ten to fifteen miles below Rat
"Portage, and one pursues nearly a straight course for a
"distance of sixty-five miles, and joins the Winnipeg below
"the Barrière Falls. The windings of this immense river are
"very abrupt and opposite, suddenly changing from north-
"west to south-west and from south-west to north-west, for
"distances exceeding twenty miles. In its course of 163
"miles, it descends, by a succession of magnificent cataracts,
"349 feet.

"Some of the falls and rapids present the wildest and most
"picturesque scenery, displaying every variety of tumultuous
"cascade, with foaming rapids, treacherous eddies, and
"huge swelling waves, rising massive and green over
"hidden rocks. The pencil of a skilful artist may succeed
"in conveying an impression of the beauty and grandeur
"which belong to the cascades and rapids of the Winnipeg;
"but neither sketch nor language can portray the astonishing
"variety they present, under different aspects, in the grey
"dawn of morning, or rose-coloured by the setting sun, or
"flashing in the brightness of noonday, or silvered by the
"soft light of the moon."


The Hudson's Bay Company's Fort at Rat Portage is on an island at one outlet of the Lake of the Woods, and is under the charge of Mr. Macpherson.

Mr. Butler, of the 69th Regiment, who had been employed on secret service in the Red River Settlement, met us on our arrival, and gave us a very alarming description of the dangerous rapids through which we had to pass on our voyage down the Winnipeg. He had just returned from Fort Garry, and described the Settlement as being in a very disturbed state. When he left, the Fenian flag was flying from the Fort. I had forgotten to mention that when crossing the Lake of the Woods, we had met a party of *voyageurs* from Fort Garry, which had been sent by the loyally-disposed residents there to urge Colonel Wolseley to push on the advance of the troops, on account of fresh disturbances and deeds of violence, and also to assist us in navigating the Winnipeg. The party was under the charge of a Mr. Monkman, whose experience of the country and knowledge of the people proved of great service to the expedition. Having crossed Rat Portage, a row of nine miles brought us to the Les Dalles Rapids. A short time before we arrived there, I had an opportunity of testing the truth-telling capacities of the Indians, whose veracity is generally much doubted. A handsome-looking savage, accompanied by his boy, paddled up to my boat from the shore, and made signs that he wished to exchange some fish and ducks for flour. I accosted him, first in English, then in French, and told my Indian to speak to him also; but he shook his head, as if denying any knowledge of the languages. Having got what he wanted, he paddled away, and, turning round in his canoe, shouted out, in excellent English: "Good-bye, boys!" Hearing one's native tongue in such an uncivilized region, from the mouth of a savage, was certainly a great surprise. He must have picked up some knowledge of the language at the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, and, wishing to appear before us a savage to perfection, half-starving with hunger, thought it best to shew ignorance.

The Les Dalles Rapids are 20 chains in length, with a fall of 3 feet, and boats and canoes can run them with safety. Then 21 miles more of river, and we ran the Grande Décharge, a fall of 6 feet. The channel is very narrow and swift. The Yellow Mud Falls and Portage, the Pine Portage, with the dangerous Cave Rapids, which have often proved so destructive to the bateaux of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the De L'Isle Rapids, were passed safely in succession; and we came next to the beautiful falls and cascades named the Chûte-à-Jacquot, which occasion a fall in the river of nearly 13 feet. Having crossed the Portages named the Trois Points de Bois, which let the river down 37 feet, we arrived at the Slave Falls, the scene of one of those terrible incidents in Indian life formerly of frequent occurrence in these inhospitable wilds. Tradition tells that a slave of a ferocious master, maddened by long-continued cruelty, calmly stepped into a canoe above these falls, in the presence of the tribe, and, suddenly pushing off from shore, wrapped her deer-skin robe round her face, and glided over the crest of the cataract, to find rest in the surging waters below. The next falls were the Barrière and the Otter, both of which were passed safely. At the former we met a party of Hudson's Bay *voyageurs* on their way from Fort Garry to Fort Francis, with stores: they reported that Riel was still in possession of the Fort, and did not believe that the troops would ever reach him.

A distance of seven miles from the Otter Falls lie the dangerous Seven Portages. The navigation between each of these portages is difficult and dangerous; and although we got safely past them, the other companies, both in front and behind us, were not so fortunate, as was proved by the wrecks of boats hauled up on shore, which we saw on our return journey. The 1st Galais de Bonnet, 2nd Galais de Bonnet, Grande Bonnet, 1122 yards long, Petit Bonnet, and the White Mud, were the next portages we had to cross before reaching the Silver Falls, which Professor Hind describes as being, perhaps, the most imposing and beautiful of all the

cascades on the Winnipeg. He says:—"The volume of
" water precipitated here is immense, all the inosculating
" branches of the Winnipeg uniting some distance above the
" magnificent Silver Falls. The vast torrent descends a
" slope about 200 yards long, with an inclination of nearly
" sixteen feet, in the form of five or six gigantic swells.
" The observer may stand close to the huge heaving waves,
" and watch them rush past him with astonishing velocity
" and ever-changing form. Sometimes they send a thin
" sheet of water over the smooth rock on which he is
" standing, at the edge of the torrent; in another minute
" there may be a gulf ten or fifteen feet deep, with a terrible
" whirlpool raging below, between him and the crested
" swell, fifty feet from the shore; suddenly the gulf is filled,
" and the turbulent waters, dashing against the rocks, send
" a shower of spray far and wide over the polished gneiss
" which confines them."



Eleven miles, with one portage more, and the dangers
of the Winnipeg were over.

We reached Fort Alexander, the appointed *rendezvous* of
the regular troops, on Friday, 19th of August, having thus
completed the navigation of Rainy River, Lake of the Woods,
and the Winnipeg River, with twenty-six portages, in eleven
days. All were in good health and spirits, and right glad
that we had got so far on our journey without a serious
accident of any kind occurring. It must have been gratifying
to Colonel Wolseley, on his arrival in his canoe from Fort
Francis, to hear the hearty cheers with which he was
welcomed by the little force that had done so well.

By the 20th of August all the companies of the regulars
had come in; and on Sunday afternoon, 21st August, the
boats, to the number of fifty, started for Lake Winnipeg,
which was reached after a row of two miles down the river.
A south-west wind in our favour enabled us to make Elk
Island, eighteen miles north-west from Fort Alexander,

before we halted for the night. In a wonderfully short space of time the boats were hauled up on the beach, and numerous camp-fires lit, round which crowds of hardy red-capped soldiers were crowding. Before day-light next morning the bugles blew the *réveillé*, and after the usual tea and biscuit we once more started, steering south-west for the Red River.

Lake Winnipeg, an Ojibway word, signifying "dirty water," is said to occupy 8,500 square miles; its greatest length being 280 miles, and its breadth varying between 6 and 60 miles. Numerous observations have established its height above sea-level to be between 600 and 630 feet, and its elevation above Lake Superior is about 28 feet. Frequent storms, of great fury, prevail on this lake, making its navigation by small boats and canoes extremely hazardous. Lake Winnipeg is in the centre of an immense plateau. The large rivers which drain the plateau converge towards it: they flow from the east, the south, and the west, and, having mingled their waters, pass through a common channel into that great salt-lake, the Hudson's Bay.

Towards evening we arrived off the mouth of the Red River, which enters Lake Winnipeg by four or six distinct channels; the approach to the one by which we entered the river being marked out by buoys, on account of numerous sand-banks and shoals. The name of the river is described as being derived from a bloody combat between Indians, which took place on the borders of Red Lake; hence the name of the lake, which, being one of the principal tributaries of the river, gave the latter its name. Professor Hind describes the Red River as rising in Ottertail Lake, State of Minnesota. The north-east end of Ottertail Lake is in latitude $60^{\circ} 24' 1''$, and the general course of the river is westerly, through an attractive undulating country, until it makes its great bend to the north in latitude $46^{\circ} 9''$. It then meanders through a boundless prairie, which gradually declines in elevation, until it forms a vast level plain,

elevated above the water of the river only about one and a-half to two feet, at its ordinary stage, in June. The distance of this great bend is 110 miles from Ottertail Lake, and the vast low prairie through which the river subsequently flows, in an exceedingly tortuous channel, is as level as a floor. He makes the length of Red River within British territory to be 140 miles, by the winding of the stream. It debouches into Lake Winnipeg in latitude $50^{\circ} 28'$, longitude $96^{\circ} 50'$. Its most important affluents on the east side are Roseau River and German Creek. On the west side it receives, in latitude $49^{\circ} 53' 24''$, and longitude $96^{\circ} 52'$, the Assiniboine, or Stony River. At the confluence of these streams, Fort Garry, the capital of the settlement, and the head-quarters of the fur-trade in British America, is situated.

The scenery at the mouth of the river was extremely dreary, the swamps on both banks being covered with reeds and rushes, which are inhabited by vast numbers of ducks, geese, bittern, plover, snipe, and other descriptions of game.

Having rowed up the river for fourteen miles, we camped for the night opposite the settlement of the Swampy Indians, distant about twelve miles from Lower Fort Garry, or the Stone Fort.

During the evening, Henry Prince, the loyal chief of the tribe, with a number of his warriors, came across the river to pay a visit to the commander-in-chief. They were dressed in full paint and feathers, and were armed to the teeth. After delivering a long-winded speech, professing the utmost loyalty on the part of his tribe to the Queen, their Great Mother, the Indian magnate and his young men withdrew, having obtained, as a reward for their loyalty, a barrel of pork and a barrel of flour.

We reached the Stone Fort next morning, 23rd August, in time for breakfast, and were most hospitably and kindly

entertained by Mr. Donald Smith, the Governor of the Company. As we neared the Stone Fort, the scenery became very pretty: farms and houses lined the left bank, which was rich prairie land, the right bank being thickly wooded. Crowds of Indians rushed out from their wig-wams and huts, and fired their guns in the air as a signal of welcome; the bells of the Protestant churches were rung, and every possible demonstration of welcome made by the settlers. In fact, the people seemed to understand readily that the expedition was—what it was meant to be—one of peace, not of war. They were overjoyed at the prospect of order and quietude, to which for a long time they had been total strangers.

On our departure from the Stone Fort, my company was chosen to form an advanced guard, which was to skirmish across the country, between the river and the road, to Fort Garry, 22 miles distant. It was to extend across the country for two miles, keeping well ahead of the boats, but always in communication with them by signallers. Mr. Butler, the intelligence-officer, was sent on horseback to examine the country on the right bank. He was rather unkindly described afterwards, in the report of the special correspondent of the *Toronto Globe*, as "being somewhere, "doing something for our security—we do not know "exactly what; but the idea of a man patrolling an "unknown country with a seven-shooting revolving-rifle, "gives his services great value in our eyes."

The rifleman's *forte* is certainly not riding; but whether he had ever seen a horse before, or not, was a matter of very slight consequence to Colonel Wolseley. A motley collection of horses, ponies, and mules, all more or less lame, halt, and blind, were brought in front of the astonished company, and the men told-off, as they stood in the ranks, to mount them. "Please, sir, I can't ride," said one man, imploringly. "I don't care a rap; get on to that mule!" said the colonel, pointing, as he spoke, to a half-starved-looking brute,

with a foal standing beside her. The unhappy rifleman approached the animal cautiously, and watching his opportunity, clambered on to its back, and, in company with the foal, took up his position in the ranks of the Light Cavalry!

Captain McCalmont, of the 9th Lancers, whom I mentioned as having come out from England to join the expedition, was now in his glory. Up to this time the work had not agreed with him so well as he expected; but he joined the troop of skirmishers with alacrity, and, armed with a huge cudgel, proceeded to set his beast in motion. Those who had been fortunate enough to secure animals equipped with saddle and bridle were few and far between, most of the company having to put up with an old blanket tied on with a piece of string, and a rope passed through the animal's mouth to serve as reins. Carts and light buggies were provided to carry the knapsacks and the men who were not mounted.

During the day, I was sent to the bank of the river to signal some message to Colonel Wolseley, and was accompanied by Captain McCalmont and the color-sergeant. Right across the country we galloped until we were suddenly stopped by a moderately-sized drain, at which we stared with consternation. "How were our gallant steeds to get over it?" was the question. "Stand back! I'll show you the way!" shouted the young cavalry-officer; and so he did—down one side and up the other—his example being immediately followed by the remainder of the party. We all went at the ditch in true hunting style, but the horses knew better than to take it in such. A bugler, in the execution of his office, came to untimely grief that day. Being ordered by the officer in command of the skirmishers to sound some call, he halted his pony, and proceeded to do so; but at the first sound of the instrument, the pony, unaccustomed to the noise, began to kick, and the bugler shot gracefully over his head, into a ditch close by. We had

orders to stop all communication between the Stone Fort and Fort Garry, and to make prisoners of every one coming from the latter place.

A gentleman connected with the Hudson's Bay Company rode from his residence, near Fort Garry, to meet the advanced guard, and, in a voice thick with emotion, bade us welcome to the territory. Having concluded his congratulatory speeches, he proposed to return, but was told he must remain where he was, and consider himself as under our care for the present. "All right, gentlemen," he said; "all right; if this is the way you treat loyally-disposed persons, I can only say I am very sorry. You have missed a good supper, though, in your readiness to consider everyone as an enemy; for on leaving my house, the last words I said to my wife were: 'Have a good supper prepared, with lots of beer and whiskey, as I shall bring back some of the officers with me!'" From the appearance of the gentleman, I should say he had had a similar repast before he started. As we rode past his residence, I thought it advisable to ascertain for myself whether he really lived there or not; and personal inspection proved that he had spoken the truth, both with regard to its locality and also the excellence of its malt-liquor. The appearance of my pony at the gate induced the other officers of the advanced guard to look for its owner, whom they found seated with his prisoner, discussing a modest quart. On leaving the house, we considerably allowed our friend to remain where he was.

When we had reached a point six miles from Fort Garry, we halted for the night. A camp was formed at the river-side, and the advanced guard stationed as an out-lying picquet on the prairie. Another out-lying picquet was stationed on the opposite side of the river. Everyone who came within the line of sentries was detained, and several of Riel's counsellors were made prisoners. One made a desperate effort to force the sentries and effect his escape, with the assistance of what he called his 2-40 horse; and

it was not until he was assured that the sentries had orders to prevent such attempts in an effectual manner that he promised to desist. All through the night the rain poured down; the picquet on the prairie, drenched to the skin, were huddled round their camp-fire, with no cover of any kind to protect them from the violence of the storm.

In the morning, at six o'clock, the boats were under weigh, rowing up the river in three columns, and the advanced guard resumed its skirmishing. The people we met gave us different accounts of the intentions of the Riel party in Fort Garry; some said he would fight to the last, and that he had fifty desperate men to aid him; and others thought he would run away at the last moment. The scouts brought in word that the guns in the bastions of the Fort were pointing down the road, in the direction we were expected to approach; that ammunition and muskets had been served out to those inside, and the gates closed.

When two miles, by road, from Fort Garry, the boats were left under the charge of the *voyageurs*, and the whole force landed. The guns were fastened to carts and dragged along, and, preceded by the skirmishers, the regular portion of the expeditionary force advanced in battle-array upon Fort Garry. As we approached it, several persons were observed hurrying off across the prairie, in buggies and on horseback, and all who came near us were detained. Every moment we expected the guns to open fire upon us, as we could see their muzzles pointing in our direction.

Staff-officers were sent to see if the gates were open, and galloped back to say they were, and that Riel and his warriors had bolted. With the band playing at our head, we marched into the Fort, and formally took possession by hauling the Union-Jack up the flag-post with three cheers for the Queen, and firing a Royal salute of 21 guns from the very cannon which had been loaded for our reception. Riel and his adherents had left the Fort immediately they saw us coming over the prairie, and had crossed the river;

their breakfast was left half-finished on the tables, and the general appearance of the rooms indicated that they had made a somewhat hasty toilet.

Our men were located in quarters lately occupied by the insurgents, and the officers took possession of the private apartments of the late self-constituted governor. Colonel Wolseley was entertained by Mr. MacTavish, the officer of the Hudson's Bay Company in charge of the Fort.

Fort Garry lies in latitude $40^{\circ} 52' N.$, and $96^{\circ} 53' W.$ longitude, and has an elevation of 700 feet above the sea-level. It is surrounded by high stone-walls, except on the northern side where a wooden wall, formed of large logs, laid one over the other, is built. The circular towers at the angles were occupied by small cannon, and in every room in the Fort muskets and ammunition had been stored away. On the opposite side of the river lies the Roman Catholic Cathedral, with its convent and palace of the bishop. Half-a-mile from the Fort lies the village of Winnipeg, from which numbers of people soon came to bid us welcome to the settlement.

The agricultural appearance of the settlement is remarkably pleasing and attractive, from the number of farms that have been laid out on the rich pasture-land of the prairie. Wheat is the staple crop, and the grain is of excellent quality. In favorable years wheat ripens and is ready for the sickle in three months from the day of sowing, which speaks well for the fertility and abundance of the soil. Several farmers, who had lived there for a long time, assured me that they could sow on their land for fifty years. Both hay and grass are easily obtained from the prairie; and hops, peas, potatoes and turnips, all grow well. Considerable quantities of sugar are made from the ash-leaved maple on the Assiniboine. The maple, which at one time grew in considerable quantities near Sugar-Point, on the Red River, is not the true sugar-maple (*acer saccharinum*) so common in Western Canada, but another species, also furnishing an abundance of juice, from

which sugar is made as far north as the Saskatchewan River. It is the ash-leaved maple (*regundo flaxinifolium*).—(General Lefroy.) Poplar, exceeding four feet in diameter, elm, exceeding three feet, and oak, of very large dimensions, are said to be the prevailing forest trees.

In the work compiled by General Lefroy, the half-breed hunters of the colony are thus described:—"These hardy and fearless children of the prairie constitute a race to which much interest may reasonably be attached. They are endowed with remarkable qualities, which they derive in great part from their Indian descent, softened and improved by the admixture of the European element. It is, however, much to be regretted, that, from the singular necessities of their position, many of them are fast subsiding into the primitive Indian state. Naturally improvident, and perhaps indolent, they prefer the wild life of the prairies to the tamer duties of a settled home: this is the character of the majority, and belongs more to those of French descent than of Scotch or English origin. The improvidence of many of the half-breeds is remarkable, and many of them can be regarded in no other light than men slowly subjecting themselves to a process of degradation, by which they approach nearer and nearer to Indian habits and character, relinquishing the civilized but to them unrequited pursuit of agriculture for the wild excitement and precarious independence of a hunter's life. The half-breed hunters, with their splendid organization when on the prairies; their matchless power for providing themselves with all necessary wants for many months together, and now since a trade with the Americans has sprung up, if they choose for years; their perfect knowledge of the country, and their full appreciation and enjoyment of a home in the prairie wilds, winter or summer, would render them a very formidable enemy in case of disturbance or open rebellion against constituted authorities.

"The half-breed hunters of Red River could pass into the open prairies at a day's notice, and find themselves

“perfectly at home and secure, where white men, not
“accustomed to such a life, would soon become powerless
“against them, and exposed to continued peril.”

Bishop Taché, in his sketch of the North-West of America, thus describes the prairie:—“The poor colonist who has
“labored at clearing the dense forest-land of Canada, who
“can only plant his land after a terrible struggle with the
“giants that cover it, and after having dug it out to great
“depths in order to extract innumerable enormous roots—he,
“no doubt, naturally conceives a hatred for forest-land. He
“has expended too much labour and exhausted too much of
“his resources to believe in the superiority of this kind of
“land. It appears to him that open country, where nothing
“more is necessary, so to speak, than to put the plough in
“the ground, is a fortunate country. From this point of
“view, prairie has an unquestionable advantage; but as
“nothing here below is perfect, the advantage has its
“disheartening compensation in a very great scarcity of
“timber and firewood. Time, far from bringing a remedy,
“increases the evil. Fires, which destroy even forests, rob
“the prairies of such small advantages as they may have in
“this respect. I have crossed well-wooded districts, where
“a few years afterwards I have suffered from cold, not
“knowing wherewith to supply the smallest fire. The
“conflagrations are more numerous in proportion to
“the increase of travellers. They are becoming more
“difficult to check as they find fuel in greater abundance,
“and more combustible on the scene of their last
“depredation.

“To the buffalo-hunter the prairie is a country without
“equal. Winter and summer—there is his empire; there
“he finds true happiness in urging his swift steed in pursuit
“of prey, until recently so easy; it is there that, without
“obstacle, and, so to speak, without labor, he lays out roads,
“bounds over space, and enjoys a spectacle often grand,
“although a little monotonous. Seen in the flower-season,

“the prairie is very beautiful, for its verdure-covered ground is quite enamelled with different colors. It is a rich carpet, of which the various tints seem to have been arranged by the hands of an artist; it is a sea which, on the least breath, undulates its scented waves. The plain, sometimes so uniform as to shew an apparently artificial horizon, suddenly changes into rolling prairie. Its beauty then increases; a thousand little hills now raise themselves here and there, and, by their almost regular variety, give the idea of waves upon the ocean in the midst of a great storm. It appears as if the powerful hand of the Ruler of seas, mocking the fury of the waves, had seized them at the instant of their rising, and, by a peremptory order, changed them into solid land. In many directions, erratic ~~stumps~~ seen on the top of downs or hillocks, appear in the distance like the petrified spray of foaming waves. Elsewhere the prairie is planted with clumps of trees, and dotted with lakes as pleasing as they are various in form. Here are basins which one would say were the reservoirs of great rivers, and of which the sides carry visible marks of the levels once assigned by the Supreme Artist to these dried-up ponds. Excepting the wild and rugged beauty of large mountains; excepting the view of a great sheet of water bathing a beautiful roadstead, and excepting all natural beauty improved by the art, it is difficult to imagine anything more beautiful, or, at least, prettier and more lovely, than are some parts of the rolling prairie.”

The Indians who frequent the Red River Settlement are composed, principally, of three tribes, namely: the Saulteaux, or Chippeways; the Maskegons, or Swampies; and the Crees. The Saulteaux derive their name from the Sault Ste. Marie, whence they originally came. They are fine, strong men, and fond of warfare. The Swampies are different: they are gentle, averse to bloodshed, easy to influence, and less superstitious. The Cree Indians consist of two tribes: the Plain Crees—warriors, and living in camps; and the Forest Crees—humble hunters and

fishermen, leading an isolated life. These two tribes speak one language. On the prairies, towards the Rocky Mountains, those fearful savages, the Sioux and the Blackfeet, are met with.

The regular troops remained at Fort Garry until August 29th, on which date the first detachment left the settlement, and proceeded home by the same route as on the advance. By the 3rd of September the militia regiments had arrived, and all the regulars were on the return journey. One company of the 60th Rifles was sent across the country to the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods, and on arrival there took over the boats of Captain Scott's company of the Ontario militia, which had been sent there from Fort Francis.

The militia had done their work well, and had shewn that although most of them had started on the expedition as raw recruits, the pluck and spirit they were possessed of enabled them to do their share as creditably as the others. The future army of Canada will, indeed, be well supplied if it can number men in its ranks equal to the militia of the Red River Expedition.

In conclusion, I cannot do better than quote the General Orders published at Fort Garry by Colonel Wolseley :

"FIELD FORCE—MORNING ORDER.

"To the Regular Troops of the Red River Expeditionary Force :

"I cannot permit Colonel Feilden and you to start upon your return journey to Canada without thanking you for having enabled me to carry out the Lieutenant-General's orders so successfully.

"You have endured excessive fatigue in the performance of a service that for its arduous nature will bear comparison with any previous Military Expedition. In coming here from Prince Arthur's Landing, you have traversed a distance of upwards of 600 miles. Your labours began with those common at the outset of all campaigns—namely, road-making and the construction of defensive works. Then followed the arduous duty of taking the boats up a height of 800 feet, along 50 miles of river full of rapids and numerous

portages. From the time you left Shebandowan Lake until Fort Garry was reached, your labour at the oar has been incessant from day-break to dark every day. Forty-seven portages were got over, entailing the unparalleled exertion of carrying the boats, guns, ammunition, stores, and provisions, over a total distance of upwards of 15,000 yards. It may be said that the whole journey has been made through a wilderness, where, as no supplies of any sort were to be had, everything had to be taken with you in the boats. I have throughout viewed with pleasure the manner in which the officers have vied with their men in carrying heavy loads. I feel proud of being in command of officers who so well know how to set a good example, and of men who evince such eagerness in following it. Rain, too, has fallen upon 45 days out of the 94 that have passed by since we landed at Thunder Bay, and upon many occasions officers and men have been wet for days together. There has not been the slightest murmur of discontent heard from anyone. It may be confidently asserted that no force has ever had to endure more continuous labour; and it may be as truthfully said that no men on service have ever been better behaved, or more cheerful, under the trials arising from exposure to inclement weather, excessive fatigue, and the annoyance caused by flies. There has been a total absence of crime amongst you during your advance to Fort Garry; and I feel confident that your conduct during the return journey will be as creditable to you in every respect.

"The leaders of the banditti, who recently oppressed Her Majesty's loyal subjects in the Red River Settlement, having fled as you advanced upon the Fort, leaving their guns and a large quantity of arms and ammunition behind them, the primary object of the Expedition has been peaceably accomplished. Although you have not, therefore, had an opportunity of gaining glory, you can carry back with you, into the daily routine of garrison life, the conviction that you have done good service to the State; and have proved that no extent of intervening wilderness, no matter how great may be its difficulties, whether by land or water, can enable men to commit murder or to rebel against Her Majesty's authority with impunity.

"FORT GARRY, *August 28th, 1870.*"

The return journey was, as the Colonel commanding predicted, successfully accomplished: the first troops reached Prince Arthur's Landing on September 26th, and the last on October 6th; and the whole were in Montreal by October 16th. The object of the Expedition had been accomplished, and order and tranquillity restored in the Red River Settlement.

